

Our Voice

the
spare change
magazine

JULY 1997 Vol. 4 No. 7
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this wondrous
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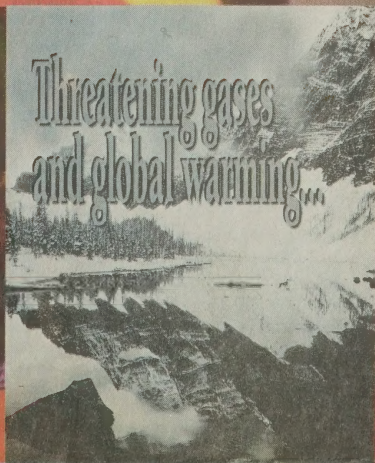
—David Suzuki

AND...

~homelessness
~k.d. lang
~wild art...
~and more.

4

Threatening gases
and global warming...



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OUR VOICE is published to provide an income opportunity for economically marginalized people in our society while communicating about their issues to the public.

ADVERTISING

For advertising rates and information, please contact **OUR VOICE** at

Edmonton 421-7966 ask for John
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LEND US YOUR MILES...

SOME OF YOUR AIR MILES or AEROPLAN POINTS, that is

In September there is an international street publications conference planned in Seattle, and we would like to be able to send representatives, vendors and writers, from **Our Voice**.

It's a steep proposition for our operation, but you can help. Look into your back closet, or your purse or wallet and pull out those AEROPLAN Points that you aren't likely to use, or just some of your AIR MILES, and send them in to us.

If you donate just a few, and other readers contribute some of their miles or points, we will be able to send some people to the Seattle meeting.

Street publications from all over North

America, and even from Europe, will be sending representatives for what will be a founding meeting of a street publications organization. There are going to be workshops and exchanging information on a wide variety of topics, from how best to support vendors, to how to work in a community, to how to make a better publication.

There are a number of people who have worked a great deal on **Our Voice** and could contribute to, and gain from the conference. We want them to go.

You can help. For more information about "flying with us" call editor, Keith Wiley at 424-0624 or 1-800-882-5954.

Thanks to Ed Greanya

On behalf of the magazine vendors and all the other people he worked with and helped we have to send a heart-felt thank you and good bye to Ed Greanya. Ed distributed the magazine to vendors from CUPS (Calgary Urban Project Society) for the last three years, and he was a tireless worker for this publication. And for the vendors, "He always went to bat for the vendors," says Calgary writer Candy Watson. Candy joined in for the Christmas parties and picnics Ed organized for the magazine vendors. "His heart really bled for some of the vendors... he spent some hard times worrying about vendors," Candy said.

A dairy farmer and then a business accountant, Ed came to **Our Voice** looking for something a bit different, a bit of an adventure. He found the cause!

Ed Greanya was a great ambassador for **Our Voice** and the people who sell it. He often went out to help vendors and took any and all complaints and handled them personally.

Ed has retired to Victoria now, where he loves the greenery and long growing season. He had to leave the work with **Our Voice** on his doctor's orders.

Ed you gave us all a lot, Thank you.

— Keith Wiley

JULY 1997 Vol. 4 No. 7

OUR VOICE welcomes your contribution.

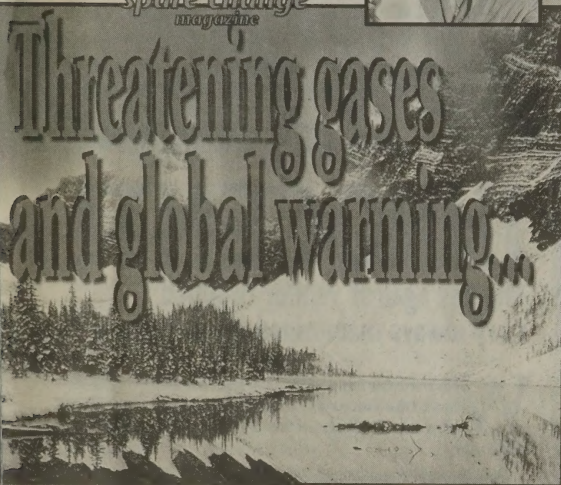
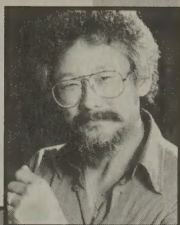
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Our Voice

the spare change magazine



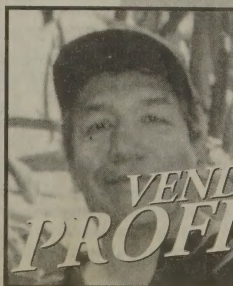
JULY
1997

The people who bring
you **OUR VOICE**

This publication exists because of the efforts of the people who sell it to you on the street, the vendors. For our vendors **OUR VOICE** is a job that helps them to be independent and self-employed. Each issue we highlight one of our vendors in Vendor Profile to let you know a little bit about the people who bring you **OUR VOICE**. ♦



- ▶ 20 News of the World
- ▶ 23 Cartoons

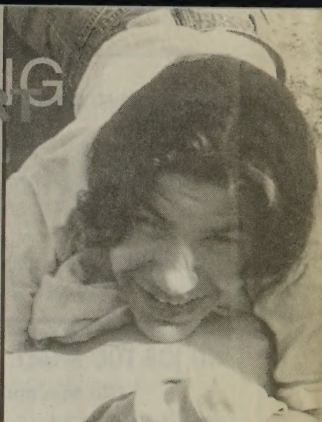


VENDOR
PROFILE

HEALING ART

Kids make wild art to
uncover their
creative side

12-13 ▶



Threatening gases
Climate change and a
note from David Suzuki

4-7

16 ▶

WORDS ON
THE STREET

TALKING
BACK
Your opinion
Our opinion

10 & 11 ▶



HELP WANTED!
The Greatest Outdoor
Show on Earth

◀ 14-15

k.d. lang awarded
Order of Canada

17 ▶



19 ▶

POETRY

◀ 21

Our Vendor Profile

22 ▶

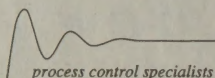
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Our Voice					3

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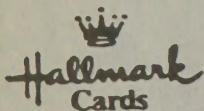
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INNOCENT!

**Charges against vendor dropped
Gary always maintained his innocence**

With a possible multi-year prison term hanging over his head, **Our Voice** vendor Gary Sommert was much relieved when serious charges of armed robbery were withdrawn early in May.

Gary has always maintained complete innocence of the crime, a vicious pistol-whipping of a Safeway store manager during an armed robbery last August 30.

A dramatic photo of Gary being arrested with a police pistol pointed to his head in a public food court made the front page of the **Edmonton Sun** newspaper. The photo was a shock for Gary and all of Gary's family.

Gary had been sitting with a friend, almost ready for his second coffee, when the cops surrounded him, he says. He and his friend where "taken down" and handcuffed. "I didn't even know there was a gun to my head," Gary said later.

Now whenever he's sitting in a public place Gary says he looks around to see if the cops are coming.

He was brought downtown, where a plain-clothes detective tried to convince Gary to confess to a crime that he had no knowledge of. The detective told Gary he must have been in a black-out when it happened. Gary refused to confess to something he was totally innocent of. He was told that he'd been identified by witnesses to the crime from a picture line-up.

Gary was in jail for 27 days. "I did that jail time, which I never should have," Gary's mother put up his bail, or he would have been in jail for the nine months the case has been pending. He says his mother knew he didn't do it.

"From day one, I've been feeling that when this is over, I want to be paid big." But Gary's been told that it was a simple case of mistaken identity and he cannot bring a lawsuit for wrongful arrest.

Gary had earlier sold the **Our Voice** in front of the Safeway where the crime was committed. He knew the Safeway employee who was attacked. In the preliminary hearing witnesses were not positive in identifying Gary. One witness said that when she read in the paper

Official opening of new home for Edmonton's Boyle Street Co-op

by Linda Dumont

Boyle Street Co-op officially opened its new home, after years in limbo, on Friday, May 23. In 1986, the co-op moved to the old courthouse building which was demolished in 1995 to make way for a concert hall. For nearly a year, the services of the co-op were divided among temporary locations. There was a problem finding a new location because of concern about the co-op as a neighbour. NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) became an issue.

Finally 105 Avenue just west of 101 Street was settled on as the home for The Boyle Street Community Services Co-operative. The Co-op's programs reach out and help poor people. It also has an alternative education program which became the first charter school in Alberta in 1996.

The official opening ceremonies kicked off with a tour of the centre and displays of the programs offered, then a colourful demonstration of pow-wow dancing with Eric Bearhead and his drum group. Edmonton City Councillor Michael Phair brought greetings from the City of Edmonton. Benefactors to the Co-op were acknowledged by presentations of works of art which will later be hung in the Co-op with a small plate naming each benefactor. Those acknowledged included the City of Edmonton, Les Mitton, Alberta Family and Community Services, Wigger Draperies, Muttart Foundation, Downtown Rotary Club, Boyle Street Services Society Volunteers and Donors, and Community Volunteers.

Alice Hanson unveiled a portrait of the late Mary Burle, who worked as an outreach worker for the Co-op for eighteen years. She was on leave of absence at the time of her death last year, and is remembered as the heart of the Co-op.

"She has that look," Hope Hunter, Director, said about the portrait, "like she's going to shake that long finger at you."

The day was rounded off with a traditional aboriginal feast and round dance attended by 500 people.

City Councillor Michael Phair (right) does the honours.

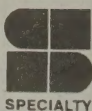


INNOCENT!

that Gary was 40 years old, she remembered that the attacker had been in his twenties, with long blonde hair, and about 5 foot seven. In court she said Gary was not the attacker.

Gary feels the fact that he was well-known as an **Our Voice** vendor in the Old Strathcona area of Edmonton made him a target for the charges. Since the charges were laid and his photo appeared on the newspaper cover Gary says people have told him they don't buy from robbers and other passers-by have made disparaging remarks. Gary responds, by saying "I did not do that."

— Keith Wiley



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Our Voice **S**



Threatening gases and global warming...

The human race is engaged in the largest experiment in history - an experiment to see what will happen to our health and the health of the planet when we make drastic changes in our climate. This is not a controlled scientific inquiry. It is a massive change in the Earth's environment, and we are gambling our children's future on its results.

Our Voice does a special inquiry into the threat from global warming

Our experiment is called global warming, and it is changing our atmosphere - throwing out of balance a delicate system that has taken billions of years to develop. -The Sierra Club

Saving our air

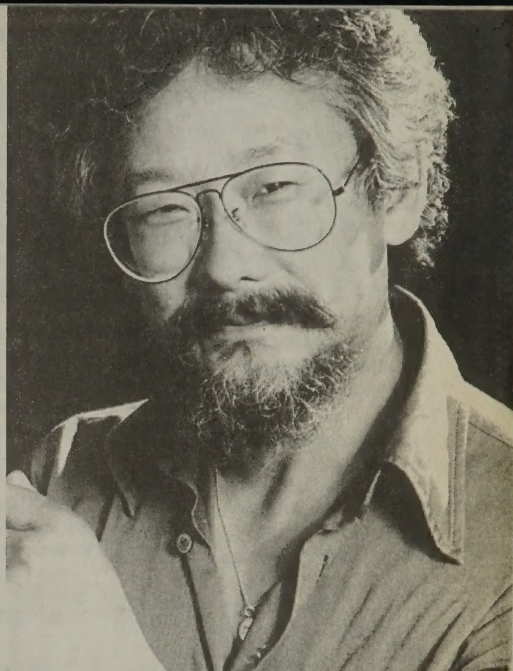
The wisdom to accompany our youthfulness and energy

BY DAVID SUZUKI

"From a baby's first breath at birth to a person's last gasp on the death bed, all people have an uncompromisable need for air. Though invisible, air is not empty space; it is a physical substance that contains the vital fuel for life - oxygen. We take air into the moist, deepest, most intimate part of our body where it literally fuses to the surfactant membrane of the lungs. When we breathe out, our expired air goes right up the noses of our nearest neighbours to suffuse their bodies. We are air and we are physically linked to all living things through the matrix of air that envelops us. Atoms in the air we breathe were once inhaled by Mahatma Gandhi, Jesus Christ and Cleopatra.

The air that supports us today was a creation of life itself. When plants discovered a way to eat sunlight and create sugar from carbon dioxide, oxygen was released as a by-product, completely changing the atomic content of air after millions of years. Carbon dioxide, a molecule that reflects heat back onto the Earth's surface, helped to keep a comfortable temperature conducive to life on the planet. Over hundreds of millions of years, plants and animals absorbed carbon dioxide and, as they were transformed into coal, oil and gas, kept carbon dioxide from returning to the atmosphere. Air is a miracle, the envelope within which all life is embedded and interconnected.

Humanity's explosive increase in number and technological musclepower is now altering the exquisite balance of greenhouse gases that have kept the planet's temperature constant for millions of years. We are creating new and potent heat trappers such as CFCs and, by burning fossil fuels, are releasing more carbon dioxide into the air



than can be removed. This is the heart of our current crisis in climate change. Since the birth of the planet, the atmosphere has been changing, influencing the shape of life and in turn, being shaped by living organisms. But those changes took place over long periods of time. Humanity has suddenly become a force capable of altering the biophysical features of the planet. Never before has a species acquired such power so quickly. But we are uniquely gifted with a capacity to foresee the consequences of our actions and thus adapt measures to avoid them. We are treating this wondrous creation of life, the air we need, with such reckless abandon that we are altering it to the detriment of all of Earth's creatures. We are a young species that now needs the wisdom to accompany our youthful energy and creativeness."

*Renowned broadcaster, scientist and environmentalist, David Suzuki is writing a new book, the summation of 35 years of his thinking about the global crisis. Due to be released this fall, the book will be called **The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering our Place in Nature**.*

Our Voice has assembled

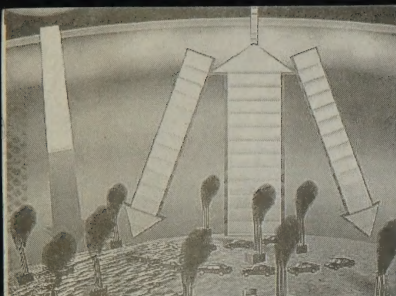
information from the Sierra Club,

The David Suzuki Foundation and

from The Pembina Institute to present

a solid picture of the global warming crisis.

Canada has failed to keep greenhouse gas emissions down, as we promised to do at the Rio Summit. This year international meetings on climate change come to a head in Kyoto, Japan, where there may be agreement to cut back exhaust by 15 percent below 1990 levels. Dealing with greenhouse gases and climate change may soon become a major international, as well as a local, issue.



What's causing global warming?



In a new study the world's preeminent atmospheric scientists conclude that global warming has begun (IPCC, 1995a,b). They project that it will expand the ranges of tropical diseases and other devastating health problems, perilous sea level rise, more intense tropical storms, extinction of countless plant

and animal species, and failure of crops in the world's most vulnerable regions. Some analysts have attempted to assess the dollar costs of these consequences of global warming. They estimate that global warming could cost as little as \$59 billion or as much as \$438 billion annually (1993).

The results of these changes are already dramatic. Glaciers are melting on 5 continents and sea levels are ris-

ing faster than at any time in history. Plants and animals are shifting their ranges in an effort to escape warming temperatures. Extreme weather events are becoming both more common and more severe. Infectious diseases are spreading into new areas, threatening millions of people with illness.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) pollution is the prime source of the global warming problem. It acts like a greenhouse, letting light and warmth enter, then trapping heat inside. By

destroying forests and burning ever increasing quantities of gasoline and other fossil fuels, we are choking our planet in a cloud of CO₂. If we do not stop we will leave our children a climate that is radically different than it is today.

To stop global warming, we must cut our CO₂ emissions. By taking these actions now we can reduce carbon dioxide pollution to 20% below 1990 levels by the year 2050:

- Raise fuel economy standards for automobiles
- Increase energy efficiency through improved heating, cooling, lighting and building systems
- End subsidies for polluting fossil fuel use; and
- Promote the use of safe, renewable resources such as wind and solar power.



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From
The Sierra Club.

Canada is definitely not a world leader in saving the atmosphere

In May 1990, Canada made a commitment to stabilize its net emissions of greenhouse gases at 1990 levels by the year 2000. Five years later, federal and provincial governments released Canada's National Action Program on Climate Change, a document that established a framework under which governments will now begin to develop actions to help Canada meet its stabilization commitment.

What is taking so long? Why has Canada not taken more decisive action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

While there is agreement on the broad objectives of climate change policy within the Canadian government, there are significant differences of opinion on what should be considered in designing a strategy to meet these objectives.

- * Environment Canada argues that the government's primary concern should be avoiding the environmental impacts of climate change.

- * Natural Resources Canada argues that the government's primary concern should be to avoid economic disruption in Canada's energy industry – a major portion of the Canadian economy.

- * Finance Canada argues that the government's primary concern should be to avoid any significant new spending that would increase the federal deficit.

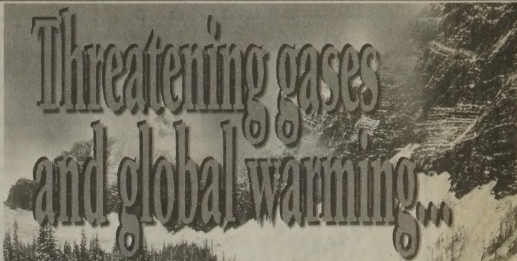
It is extremely difficult to develop an effective climate change strategy that addresses all of these concerns – and the federal government has been unable to do so.

The coal, oil, and natural gas industries, as well as electric utilities that use fossil fuels to provide power, have been the most active industry participants in the debate over Canada's climate change strategy. These industries are very interested in the issue because they are significant sources of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions (the electric utility industry alone produces 20% of Canada's carbon dioxide emissions). They feel threatened because action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will reduce demand for their

product.

As a result, these industries have advocated a 'voluntary' climate change strategy that makes it likely that no action will be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions unless there are other reasons for doing so. Seven Canadian industries account for over 69% of all the energy used by industry in Canada in 1994 (smelting and refining, pulp and paper, chemicals, petroleum refining, steel, cement, mining). For many of these industries, climate change takes a back seat to other environmental concerns. As a result, these industries have been much less active in the climate change debate. When they have spoken out on Canada's climate change strategy, they have also advocated a voluntary approach.

As climate change continues in the future, a number of Canada's key natural resource industries (e.g., forestry, fishing, agriculture) are likely to be increasingly affected. More severe forest fires and changing ocean temperatures have already had some impact. Another



industry increasingly concerned about climate change is the insurance industry, which has seen payments for climate-related disasters increase significantly in recent years.

Over 100 Canadian environmental organizations have formed the Canadian Climate Action Network (CANet). Formed in 1988, CANet has consistently called on Canada to make a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 20% below 1990 levels by 2005. It has also designed, analyzed and proposed a broad range of regulatory, fiscal and voluntary measures that it has urged governments to implement in order to assist Canada in meeting this goal.

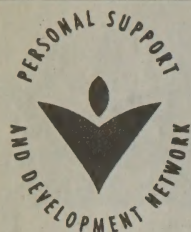
From The Pembina Institute in Drayton Valley, an environmental organization doing work on climate change and "eco-efficiency".

What can you do about it?

You could stop driving your car, or heating your house, but practically there aren't a lot of direct ways an individual can affect global warming. The changes need to come from all of us, society-wide, and will have to be led by governments. Governments will only act when there is a strong public pressure, and that can only come from people like ourselves.

Right now Canadian governments are hearing the most loudly from the big energy companies, who are telling them that reducing emissions will be bad for the economy. While there are many organizations and high profile scientists and individuals who will stand up and defend our air, governments have the sense that there is no widespread will to take the difficult decisions to deal with the problem.

So there is a great deal everyone can do. In fact it's going to take the participation of very many of us, before something will be done. Pass this magazine on, express your concerns to your friends, neighbours, or even politicians. This is what it's going to take to turn around global warming.



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Talking Back

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TWO STREET PUBLICATIONS IN CALGARY?

There will be two street publications being sold by vendors on the streets of Calgary starting this month. Calgary Urban Projects Society (CUPS) has decided to initiate its own publication after ending its distributorship of **Our Voice**. Vendors will be able to sell either or both the publications. An initial effort to coordinate distribution, with one publication coming out

at the beginning of the month, and a second at mid-month, fell through recently and both publications will be going on sale at the same time.

Does Calgary need two street publications? Is there enough market for two? What do you think?

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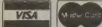
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WORDS ON THE STREET

Vendor tries spicier advertising

My husband, Glen, and I work at the Strathcona Farmers' Market selling **Our Voice**. On Saturday, Glen picked up a book from the used book stand, then went back to work. He wondered why people were giving him odd looks and not one was buying the magazine.

"Glen," I exclaimed, "What are you doing?"

He had placed the book in front of his papers, and was holding it so that the title was clearly visible. The book was called "More Joy of Sex".

A young boy came over to where I was standing with **Our Voice**.

"Are you selling those papers?" he asked.

"Yes."

"How much do they cost?"

"They are sold for the price of a donation."

He stood considering for a moment. "Would you sell one for peppers?" He was holding two yellow peppers in a clear plastic bag.

"I don't think your mother would like it." I replied.

—Linda Dumont

Do people choose to be homeless?

Foot-loose and fancy free just isn't the case for most people who live homeless. Few people willingly choose to have no home. Many of those who find themselves without shelter suffer from some serious illness. Serious alcoholism is perhaps the most common but it's not the only one. In this issue Allison Kydd's story on the Schizophrenia Society points out that there isn't enough support for many people with that illness. Half of the sufferers live with their families, but that can often be difficult and for many others it isn't an option. Some end up homeless.

Ron Murdoch's piece "Down and out on the streets of Vancouver" (page 16) is another real side of homelessness. In Ron's case it was just plain poverty that put him on the street. Ron had some bad luck, or perhaps made some bad choices, and ended up homeless. It was tough, he reports. He didn't find it at all free and easy.

It's true that homelessness sometimes results from choices people make. Some of those are bad choices, mistakes, and the consequences can be severe. Most people who end up homeless are people who are the most vulnerable and least able to care for themselves. When it's down to 'everybody for themselves', these people just lose out. The people who live in the shelters, in the parks, or in cardboard boxes are with little doubt the most suffering people in our communities.

- K.W.

Quickly convicted

Gary Sommert was pretty much convicted by the gun pointed at his head. The news award-winning photograph of this **Our Voice** vendor being arrested for armed robbery ran on the front page of the Edmonton Sun. Gary's life was dramatically changed. He had been selling this magazine for nearly three years, but now it became more difficult as people took an even wider berth around him. There's quite a stigma attached to being charged as a pistol-whipping robber.

Gary does have his problems, and has been in trouble with the law for other more minor crimes in the past. But now his biggest problem became being a

publicly visible vendor whom some people initially picked out as a violent criminal.

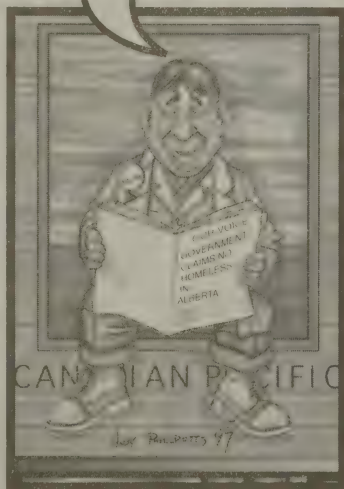
But Gary didn't do it. The crime was committed in full view of a number of people and they said it wasn't Gary.

It took nearly nine months for the police to drop the charges.

Gary had sold the magazine in front of that Safeway store in the past. He was readily identifiable. Was his prominence as a vendor part of the reason he was so quickly arrested for a crime he had nothing to do with? No one else has yet been charged with the crime. Meanwhile Gary has paid a very high price for someone else's mistake.

- K.W.

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HEALING ART

Kids find talent and healing in nature and art project at Art Gallery

BY PENELOPE TIMLECK

A group of ten disadvantaged young people set out to find the beauty in their colored pasts and bring forth incredible works of art. The kids, aged 16 to 19, are not professional artists, though their work was recently on display at the Edmonton Art Gallery, and now the exhibit, Spirit and Place, begins a three-year journey across Alberta.

"None of these kids had any formal training," says Heidi Alther, who curated the Spirit and Place project. She is the Complementary Programs Manager at the Edmonton Art Gallery. "We began here at the Gallery, then went camping for three days, which was good for the kids. There's something that happens out there that helps the kids decompress all that happens in the city."

The result is a collage of nature and elements of the city which represents the struggle of spiritual and cultural identity the kids feel in the inner city. The collection also depicts the metamorphosis each person underwent as each piece was created.



Artist: Kyle
PHOTO COURTESY EDMONTON ART GALLERY

The project was created through the imagination and dedication of The Edmonton Art Gallery, The Kids in the Hall Bistro and First Nations artist Domingo Cisneros.

The kids were selected by The Kids in the Hall Bistro, and the only requirements were that the youth be interested in art, be willing to show up and willing to work. None of the young people selected were enrolled in school.

This is not the first art project that Cisneros has helped people with. "He has worked with kids like this across Canada. He knows them and what they've been through."

"Domingo is a healer. His work is about healing."

"Their work is very poetic," says Alther. "These kids have backgrounds with a lot of pain. To obtain happiness there has to be some suffering, and it really comes through in their art."

The project was sponsored by a variety of Alberta groups as well as companies like Kodak, which gave the kids disposable cameras, and ETS, which chipped in free passes for the kids. Kids in the Hall Bistro donated small honorariums and made sure the kids ate well for the duration of the three-week project.

"The project went so well because the kids knew someone cared, someone gave them an opportunity, and someone trusted them to do a good job," says Alther.



Artist: Steve
PHOTO COURTESY EDMONTON ART GALLERY



Collecting natural objects on a 3-day trip with healing artist Domingo Cisneros, young people created an installation of art, transforming the rocks...and also, somewhat, themselves.

PHOTOS: P. TIMLECK

Touring the Show

The exhibit is set up in five sections, each consisting of individual pieces. The first is a collection of photographs of the youth on their camping trip as well as some of the writing they did.

The second part is a group of thick, knee-high tree trunks with large stones placed atop them, with the exception of one, where the stone is set off to the side. Each has been cleaned and decorated, and while from a distance each looks the same, upon closer examination each is distinct in its shape, color and overall look.

"I think the stones are representative of the kids at the beginning (of the project) ... The kids were quiet and all looking at their shoes. They were all separate," says Alther.

The next display is a hanging assemblage of bones, thin logs, chains, and people made from bits of cloth, straw and wood. If you stand under the pieces, it's remarkably like being inside a forest; it even smells like one. This next part of the display represents the changes the kids are going through while working creatively as a part of a team.

"The bones represent the pain before you reach your goal. In the tradition of the shamans, there is a period of death before you can grow. There are elements of the inner city here in the clothes the kids chose as well as with the chains.

"The chains are symbolic of people and a culture in chains ... they are not truly free. The chains are here but not binding them," says Alther.

Next are individual pieces, a variety of creatures made from the bones of dead animals, a remarkable transformation of the dead into life. The culmination of the exhibit is a huge skull and antlers with another, smaller skull hanging a few feet above it. This final piece is situated in the center of the room and resting a few feet beneath it is the shadow, or spirit, of the piece.

Which is, ultimately, what the project was about, finding some sense of spirit, and belonging, within a community.

HELP WANTED!

The Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth

BY K. RENN

It's a big job to make the Calgary Stampede live up to its billing as the greatest outdoor show on earth: a big job made up of thousands of small ones. When the Calgary Stampede comes to town, many employment opportunities come with it.

The Calgary Exhibition and Stampede is a full-time business with 1300 part time employees year round. Approximately 2,000 more people are hired for the actual 10-day event, to work in areas such as security, parking, maintenance, food service and gates. Another 800 or so are hired by Conklin to operate the rides and games of the midway.

LuAnne Morrow, Senior Employment Officer for Hire-A-Student, says many high school students look specifically for Stampede jobs—particularly concession work, and related customer services. Such jobs are ideal for people who don't have work experience, and the temporary nature of the work is not a drawback for students who don't require a full-time income.

Unemployed adults feel they simply can't afford to work the Stampede!

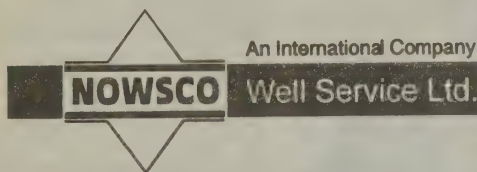
However, many unemployed adults feel they simply can't afford to work the Stampede. Although some positions offer pre- and/or post-Stampede days, the typical term is a 6-10 hour shift each day of the 10-day event. Given the brevity of such employment, the pay itself can also become a problem.

Most jobs pay the minimum wage, although some pay up to \$7.00/hour, and others (such as those in food service) present opportunities to earn tips or gratuities. But for people collecting Employment Insurance, the paperwork and hassle involved in taking any kind of work for such a short period of time usually isn't worth it.

Jimmy, Mike, and Carey prefer Cash Corner, where "a guy can get 10 dollars an hour right now, with nobody dinging you for this, that, and the other thing."

On Cash (Job) Corner, the Stampede actually has a negative impact on employment.

Mike, who's been working the corner for years, explains.



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The girls get more work than we do

"Stampede hurts. The contractors who pick us up hate crowds, and decide it's a good time to take holidays." He says that on rainy days, 20 guys could still get out (to work) in a week. But during Stampede, even if it's sunny, maybe 2 or 3 are hired.

Carey adds, "It's a write-off. The girls get more work than we do."

He's talking about the prostitutes working the corner nearby. These

bars, leaving the locals to their regular turf on the streets and corners. The fact that the regulars are kept busy in spite of the influx of newcomers suggests Stampede provides more than enough work to go around.

The Stampede also provides enhanced income

opportunities for bottle pickers because, according to a spokesperson for the Uptown Bottle Depot, the increase in cans and bottles available for pick-up is "significant". Restaurants are busier, people are socializing more outdoors, and empties are everywhere.

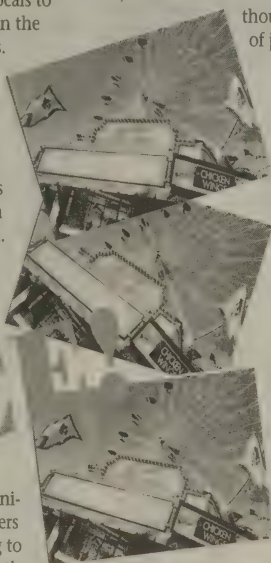
Senior Manager of Human Resources for the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede, Wendy Fogleman, sees a cycle in demand for jobs.

"Eight years ago, there was a shortage (of people to work the jobs), and two years ago there were so many people we had to control the process. Now we're back to having to market to fill the positions."

Whether it's because the work is not steady, or because there are more

people these days like Mike who view minimum wage as "selling our souls for 5-7 dollars an hour," the

thousands of jobs



that come to town for 10 days every summer ultimately do not make an impact on the lives of our city's chronically unemployed.

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girls may find more employment opportunities during Stampede, but they won't be without competition.

Carla, with Servants Anonymous, explains "There's a prostitution track across Canada that the girls work through different seasons." To some degree, they follow

There are more people these days like Mike who view minimum wage as "selling our souls for 5-7 dollars an hour."

the weather, but also they follow big events such as the Calgary Stampede or Edmonton Klondike Days. Many of them will work out of

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WORDS ON THE STREET

Down and out on the streets of Vancouver

I left a job in Dawson Creek, this being a caretaker of a men's hostel. It will be the last time I will work and live at a job site a it gets to be 24 hours day, 7 days a week. The straw that broke the camel's back was when the owner told me to move-in with an elderly woman prone to having strokes. Along with cooking breakfast for up to 30 people and cleaning up after them, I would be responsible for looking after her. I snapped and told the owner in graphic terms I wouldn't do it. The next morning after three months on the job with two days off I went AWL.

Over the course of the next 3 weeks I visited friends in Chetwynd and I took in Terrace and Prince Rupert for the first time. In November I pulled into Vancouver and staying in Dunsmuir House for the weekend. On Monday morning I visited social services and they already knew about me going AWL. They said to make sure I got a job of some kind, as they wouldn't support me past the first month as I had quit the job in Dawson Creek.

For three weeks I got no work. No one was hiring prior to the Christmas holiday. Finally a week before Christmas I started as a street vendor for Spare Change. Even though the coin was good for the week, it failed to meet my monthly rent. So on the morning of December 28th, I was on the streets with my pack and sleeping bag heading to an overpass in Burnaby, where I planned to camp overnight. It was a long day, the only entertainment being the freight trains passing by. As nightfall closed in, it struck me that I didn't have a home to go to and I was stuck here all night. The lack of choice of where I would sleep struck at my soul, raising my anxiety levels. I was not liking my self-inflicted adventure very much. After sunset I climbed into my sleeping bag to grab some shuteye. It wasn't as if I had anything on my social calendar to accomplish. My first night of homelessness passed without event, but not without the freight trains every half hour.

By Rom Murdoch

This is the first in a three part series on Ron's experiences living homeless in Vancouver.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS



k.d. lang receives the Order of Canada from the Governor-General. PHOTO: Sgt. Christian Coulombe

k.d. lang Even cowgirls get the Order of Canada

BY KIRBY

Alberta pride swelled recently when k.d. lang received the Order of Canada from the Governor-General. After receiving the prestigious honour, lang released her eighth recording and is currently filming as the lead in a TV series coming out next season.

k.d. has come a long way from her humble beginnings. Born and raised Kathy Dawn in Consort, Alberta, she picked up her first guitar at age ten and began writing song lyrics at age thirteen. When she came into the Edmonton recording studio of Larry Wanagus to sing on a commercial jingle, she was discovered.

She recorded her first single, a vinyl 45, **Friday Dance Promenade**, at Homestead with locals Stewart MacDougall on keyboards, Farley Scott on bass, Dave Bjarnason on drums and Gordie Matthews on guitar. She went on with Wanagus' Bumstead label to release her first album, *A Truly Western Experience*. Wanagus became her pilot during her rocket to fame, and remains her manager today.

k.d. rose to local success quickly with her genre stretching into Cowpunk music. On stage at clubs such as the venerable Sidetrack Cafe, she professed to be the reincarnation of Patsy Cline. By 1984, she was signed to the U.S. Sire/Warner record label and came out with **Angel With A Lariat**, which earned gold status, **Shadowland** and **Ingenue**. She won Juno and Casby awards, was picked as *Rolling Stone's* best female vocalist and won a Grammy for her duet of **Crying** with Roy Orbison.

The next album was **All You Can Eat** and lang played songs from it when she headlined last year's Edmonton Folk Festival. Her new CD, **Drag**, has tobacco as its central metaphor; lang is however a non-smoker.

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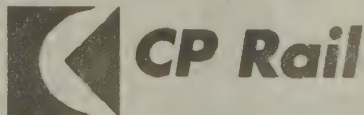
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Our Voice

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One of the lucky ones

Living with schizophrenia

BY ALLISON KYDD

Debbie calls herself "one of the lucky ones," and says she "had all the right people there for her," both during her last stay in the hospital and after she was released. But she's concerned that others aren't so lucky. In fact, two of her friends committed suicide shortly after they left the group home where they'd all been staying. Maybe they had no place to go - six months was as long as was allowed for anyone, since the home was only intended to be a transitional arrangement. Or maybe they just couldn't cope with the illness. Debbie is a person with schizophrenia.

Many people aren't very clear what schizophrenia is. Sharon Sutherland, president of the Edmonton branch of the Schizophrenia Society, says most common definitions are "inaccu-

rate and damaging to the person with the illness."

The Pocket Oxford Dictionary defines schizophrenia as a "mental disease marked by disconnection between thought, feelings and actions."

This confusing definition is typical of confused and unhelpful ideas about the nature of schizophrenia. Sutherland and Anne Packer, another member of the Schizophrenia Society, speak of "a movement to describe schizophrenia as a brain disease, a neurological disease, just like Parkinson's or Alzheimer's." This re-definition, which would mean that treatment needn't always wait upon the sufferer's recognition that treatment is necessary, began in the United States and is supported by such organizations as the National

Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

Sutherland feels it would be an advantage to have schizophrenia seen in this way. As it is, "people often have to be so desperately ill before they can get help."

Another more helpful definition of schizophrenia is this: a devastating brain disease which affects 1 in every 100 people. This ratio appears to be fairly constant, regardless of the nationality and economics of the populations being tested. The age of onset of the disease tends to be between 16 and 25 years, though children as young as 3 have been diagnosed as well. There is much evidence that the disease is at least partially genetic, staying dormant in the body until puberty. To add to the confusion, it often takes 2 or 3 years for the illness to be diagnosed, as symptoms, especially in adolescence, might be seen as "behaviour problems."

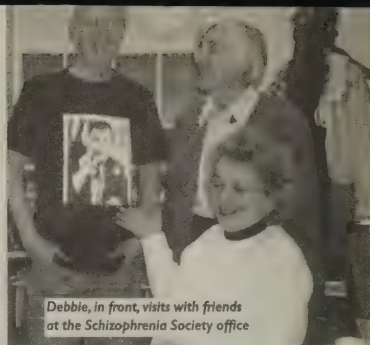
Once the diagnosis is made, there may still be problems for the person with the illness and his or her family. First there's the difficulty of finding the right medication. Different combinations work for different people. Obviously there has to be a safe place for people to stay while this difficulty is being resolved. Often this means a period of time in the hospital. After being released, people with schizophrenia also need ongoing support, someone to remind them to take their pills, someone to care whether they get up in the morning.

In the 1960's there began a movement in Canada to phase out most of the big institutions for treating people with mental illness. By about 1984, a large part of the movement was finished, though beds are still being "closed" in institutions such as Alberta Hospital. The shortcoming seems to be that the money saved by closing hospital beds goes back into the government's general revenue account, rather than into programs to support people in the community.

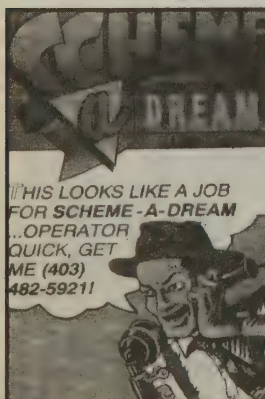
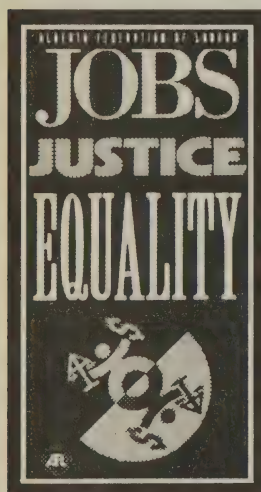
In Edmonton, nearly half of people with schizophrenia live with their parents. However, Patricia Stevenson, vice-president of the the Edmonton Branch of the Society says parents can't always offer the best kind of support. Debbie appreciates the fact that she has her family. She is living with her "mom" again, partly because she can't afford to live on her own. However, she remembers that it was hard on them both when she was "very ill". Her two sons, aged twelve and thirteen, whom she describes as "well-adjusted", also stay with her and her mother part time.

Because she thinks the best kind of support is that of other people with the illness, Debbie volunteers at the Schizophrenia Society's office on Jasper Avenue. She's also part of a "partnership team" consisting of herself, a parent of a person with the illness and a nurse or social worker. This team visits schools and university classrooms. Debbie feels this "helps get rid of the stigma" around the illness because it puts a face to it.

PHOTO: ALLISON KYDD



Debbie, in front, visits with friends at the Schizophrenia Society office



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POETRY

SWEETGRASS BRAIDED HEARTS

by Laura Marsden

The sun, landscape rising from misty ground.
There they are looking over my shoulder,
at the dirt roadway ahead.
I wanted to see you, to know you all of my life.
Thumbing papers or money
I hoped it would have been a little easier.
Shrug your shoulders, walk away, looking back.
My broken mind, heart, sinews, and nerves.
Winter solstice, thank you for the reminder.
All points bulletin, know what I mean?
Soft yellow petals you send me, and a questioning look.
So what about the arrow bag then?
I know I act immature to mention such things.
But I thought you would be here by now,
and would have all the answers.
My heart aches, so don't try and hurt me anymore.
In my dreams you dictate this crazy life.
A loves songs swarms the radio and soothes the soul.
What did you say your name was?
Not ready yet to know my future.
Just my little girl.
I'll speak for you, my daughters.
One by one, as we struggle through this journey.
Wildcats and bears from the mountains
know our thirst from the pool at the edge of the rock.
Soon I'll be leaving toward home to catch you on the rise.
This old broken mind of mine, yet I love you.
Soft spoken I'll never be, broken and kicked.
A night screamer maybe, but a mother for sure.
You listened and learned the hard way.
Now it's you I must listen to.
Forget the past, it's broken and over.
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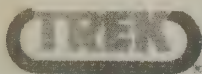
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NEWS OF THE WORLD

Skunk and bear attack leads to emergency call

It's all been going horribly wrong for campers. In Yorkshire, a man was seriously injured after his tent slid off the cliff top on which he'd pitched it. Equally disastrous were the experiences of American Casper Muffin, probably the most unfortunate camper of all time. Mr Muffin, 53, of Pocatello, had gone camping to "access my inner self". From the outset, however, things went wrong. "I borrowed a tent," he explained. "But it didn't seem to have a door, so I had to erect it with me inside, and then take it down whenever I wanted to get out, which was a nuisance because I wee a lot." On the first night his small stove exploded, setting light to his sleeping bag, while he had to move his tent nine times because skunks kept letting loose beside it. He was eventually forced to call rescue services on his mobile phone when bears surrounded his camp, whereupon he was almost killed when a helicopter inadvertently landed on his tent. "I heard my inner voice," admitted Mr Muffin, "And it said 'Hell with camping!'"

Lifting his cassock, the priestogram displayed... the end of the wedding

Weddings are, as a rule, happy affairs. Such was not the case, however, for a Huddersfield couple whose marriage was declared void because the service was conducted by a teenager on work experience. Neither was it a particularly enjoyable occasion for Italian Jero Mallini and bride Andrea, whose wedding was spoilt by a priest in suspenders. From the outset it was evident that Father Cardello was a couple of cassocks short of a pulpit. "He smelt of alcohol," recalled Mr Mallini. "And during the oaths he said: 'Do you, Jero Paulo Mallini, take this big-nosed hog to be your lawfully wedded haddock?' It was terrible." Things went from bad to worse when the priest referred to Mr Mallini as "Limpus Dickus" before lifting his cassock to reveal fishnet stockings and tight ladies' knickers. Only when he started doing the can can did the shocked couple realize he was in fact a priestogram organized by best man Pedro Allosa. "I had it coming," admitted Mr Mallini. "When Pedro got married we replaced the altar boys with inflatable women and set off stink bombs in the vestry."

Mr Pepperstool just can't lighten up

People have been getting chronically stressed on stress-relief courses. In Wiltshire, council employees returned from a managing stress week more agitated than when they'd started. "There weren't any biscuits," explained one man. "And the bed sheets were itchy." Still more unnerving were the experiences of American Jonty Pepperstool who tried to hang himself during a Calm Your Life workshop in California. Mr Pepperstool, 47, a self-confessed "nerve disaster zone", had been sent on the course by his company. Unfortunately, however, it failed to have the required effect. "I had an asthma attack during the Heal Yourself by Roaring class and broke a woman's arm in the Trampoline for Joy session," explained the hapless Mr Pepperstool. "Then I farted during the Ayurvedic Yoga." Things came to a head during the Animal Therapy class, when he was bitten by a llama, whereupon he rushed to his room and tried to hang himself from the light fitting, only to have the ceiling collapse on his head. "I suppose there's a funny side," admitted Mr Pepperstool, "although where it is I've yet to find out."

Articles compiled by Paul Sussman in **The Big Issue**, London, England's street-sold magazine.

BY JOHN ZAPANTIS

Our Voice vendor Marvin Crier's life hasn't been an easy road to follow, and the odds of Marvin staying away from the long arm of law were a million to one. That was up until the death of his mother on the Saddle Lake reserve three years ago. From that day Marvin received a spiritual awakening and the guidance of the Creator to bring his life on course to promising new roads.

A very troubled life and alcohol took Marvin in and out of numerous federal prisons for a period of 28 years. "It was hard, you know, with a person of my experience, 28 years in and out of prison. Nobody takes you very seriously and yet I'm the one that's making a lot of major changes. I quit drinking, I quit drugs and I'm living a very positive lifestyle."

But that positive lifestyle didn't come about overnight. Marvin attests that he had no concept of Native spirituality during the time he was in trouble with the law. Then things changed.

"My mother had cancer. I loved my mother very much and I prayed to the Creator every day about my mother's sickness. I asked the creator to either heal her or take her quickly. I did not want my mother to suffer. If he did either of those I vowed I'd go to Sundance for 4 years and I would fast for 4 days, 4 times a year. I would attend many sweat lodge ceremonies, pipe ceremonies, Native ceremonies as I can live a good positive spiritual life."

After his mother died, Marvin realized that there would be no turning back to the days of drinking and crime, so he continued on working as a part-time casual labourer. But last year Marvin drew the line at barely living on a minimum income. The social services department agreed to help Marvin under the condition he not work.

Marvin had a different opinion. He felt that if he could combine an additional income with the labouring it could possibly provide him with enough to enroll in a Native Studies course at the University Of Alberta. That same day, in June of 1996 after leaving the Social Services offices, Marvin encountered a friend who happened to be selling **Our Voice** and suggested that Marvin give the paper a try, hence he heard about his ordeal with the Department of Social Services.

Today Marvin Crier's dream is finally a reality; he is enrolled as a first-year student in a three-year program majoring in

VENDOR PROFILE



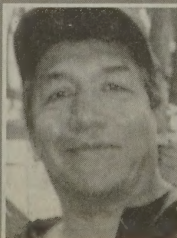
Native Studies, Native Art and Cree Linguistics.

Working as an **Our Voice** Vendor, along with the casual labour, allows him to go ahead without the support of Social Services.

He'd like to give some of his time back to youth development. He has made contact with some young kids in the city who have never been to a POW-WOW ceremony. Marvin will be taking his tee-pees out and escorting the kids to some events so that he may give them a taste of Native culture and spirituality.

"Well I'm involved in a lot of cross-cultural education like teaching interpreting Native Traditions, Native Spirituality, The laws of Nature. When we say all of our relations man is related to the plants, the animals, the water and the birds. We are all related where everything lives and breathes, and nothing is left out."

**Our
Voice**
Authorized
Vendor



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Vendor Name _____
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Authorized by _____

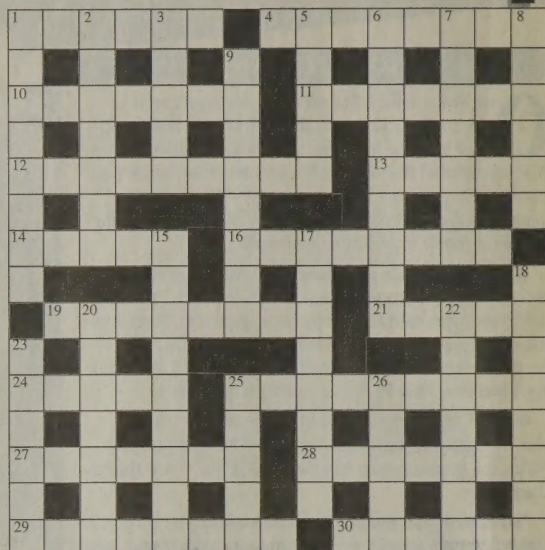
OUR VOICE VENDOR'S CODE

- I will be sober at all times while working
- I will be polite to all members of the public
- I will vend only in areas that are authorized

#51 BY SUSAN ANDREWS

ACROSS DOWN

- 1 Coaches VIA? (6)
- 4 Alcoholic drink before bedtime (5,3)
- 10 Popular kids' TV series: The Little ____ (7)
- 11 Body of water: its high salt content lets you float (4,3)
- 12 Drink with tequila, triple sec and sweet and sour (9)
- 13 Swallows liquids (5)
- 14 To play out a scene (5)
- 16 Aroused from sleep (8)
- 19 Large sea mammals once thought to be mermaids (8)
- 21 Very little (5)
- 24 A type of Greek column - not Doric (5)
- 25 What butterflies emerge from (9)
- 27 Mixing ingredients by throwing them in the air (7)
- 28 Community and lake near Snowbird Lake (7)
- 29 Figures on Easter Island - or on concert stages? (4,4)
- 30 'Scarlet hound' beer?
- 1 Gave off a low, pulsing rhythm (8)
- 2 Schwarzanegger's homeland (7)
- 3 Northern Zimbabwean city (5)
- 5 Country Columbus was originally looking for (5)
- 6 Decorative or ceremonial gear worn on the head (4,5)
- 7 Ingredient once widely used in soap (7)
- 8 Wood cut into uniform lengths (6)
- 9 To guess or get a ballpark figure (8)
- 15 To roof a house with layers of straw (9)
- 17 A variety of items (8)
- 18 Hiding drugs? (8)
- 20 Someone who's lost their memory (7)
- 22 Hinted at (7)
- 23 Used to screen out unwanted material (6)
- 25 Imprisoned (5)
- 26 After, or from that time on (5)

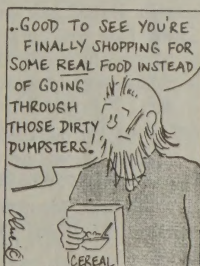


Answers to JUNE Crossword #50

DOWN: 1. NINE, 2. NICK, 3. NICK, 4. NICK, 5. NICK, 6. NICK, 7. NICK, 8. NICK, 9. NICK, 10. NICK, 11. NICK, 12. NICK, 13. NICK, 14. NICK, 15. NICK, 16. NICK, 17. NICK, 18. NICK, 19. NICK, 20. NICK, 21. NICK, 22. NICK, 23. NICK, 24. NICK, 25. NICK, 26. NICK, 27. NICK, 28. NICK, 29. NICK, 30. NICK.

Puzzle #51 answers will be published in the July issue of *Our Voice*.

The Other Side



Soupline Bob



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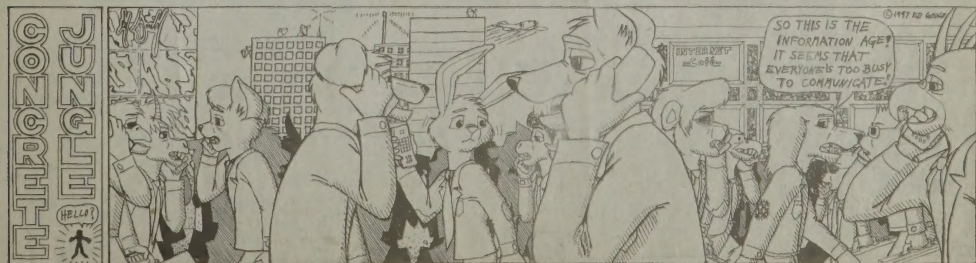
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a better life because of volunteers like Sharon*



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